



TENNESSEE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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Tennessee Human Rights Day Celebration to Honor Human Rights Champions

The Tennessee Celebration of International Human Rights Day will take place in Nashville at the First Amendment Center on December 10th, 5pm – 7pm. The celebration centers around the presentation of awards to human rights champions in three categories: Rising Advocate, Outstanding Service and Lifetime Achievement. Past recipients of these prestigious honors have included the Rev. Bill Barnes, Rev. James “Tex” Thomas, Rosetta Miller Perry, Father Joseph Breen, Gatluak Thach, First Baptist Capitol Hill, and many more.

A committee of human rights organizations and nonprofits, including the Tennessee Human Rights Commission, Metro Human Relations Commission, United Nations Association, Amnesty International, Tennessee United for Human Rights, the Church of Scientology and others, work together each year to plan the event.

This year, Rising Advocate Awards will be given to three individuals who have made great strides for human rights and show even greater promise for the future. They are Alice Gatebuke, a Nashville resident who cofounded the African Great Lakes Action Network which helps to build universal access to peace, justice and prosperity in the African Great Lakes Region; Ashford Hughes, an emerging leader for the labor movement who has been a proponent of labor and worker’s rights; and Aisha Lbhalla with the Muslim Women’s Council who has been working for religious freedom and cultural diversity.

The award winner in the category of Outstanding Service is Dr. Marisa Richmond, the first trans woman to win an election in the state of Tennessee, for her tireless work to ensure transgender equality and equality between Caucasian and African American transgender people in Tennessee.

Lifetime Achievement awards will go to Kwame Lillard, who was significantly involved in the management of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Nashville sit-ins, and the Freedom Rides and training of Freedom Riders; and Bernard Werthan, a

founding member of the Family of Abraham and Faith and Culture Center, as well as member of the Community Advocates Advisory Council joint initiative of Vanderbilt Medical Center and Meharry Medical College, past board member of Goodwill Industries, Community Nashville, Urban League of Middle Tennessee, Nashville Business Minority Center, and YWCA Advisory Board, among others.

During the ceremony, there will be a special posthumous tribute paid to lifelong civil and human rights activist Francis Guess.

International Human Rights Day occurs every year to commemorate the ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations on Dec 10, 1948. According to the event's website, nashvillehumanrights.org, "In Tennessee, Human Rights Day has become a day to reflect and look at lessons learned and battles won, while various human rights groups join forces and commit to creating an even better future."

The event this year is ticketed at \$10, with proceeds going to help a group of students visit Model United Nations. For more information or to reserve a seat, visit www.nashvillehumanrights.org.

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